

### **Takemairi Mountain Pilgrimages**

Since olden times, islanders have considered the foot of a mountain to be a boundary between cultivable land and the sacred realm where deities dwell. Expeditions into the outer ring of the Maedake peaks and certainly the Okudake range deeper in the interior were not undertaken lightly. In the pilgrimage practice known as *takemairi*, township representatives ascend a nearby peak each spring to pray for good fishing, plentiful harvests, and the well-being of villagers. Each autumn they climb again to express thanks to the mountain deities. Votive offerings of rice, salt, *shochu* liquor, seaweed, and sand from the shore are carried to the peak. On the way back, the pilgrims cut branches to share with their fellow villagers. The trek from Nagata to the summit is about 17 kilometers.

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To book a village tour in Nagata, visit [yakushima.jp](http://yakushima.jp) online or the Yakushima Environmental and Cultural Village Center in person at:

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